



SEATTLE ARTS COMMISSION
Minutes
Monthly Meeting
Tuesday, February 13, 2018
Seattle City Hall, Boards & Commission L280

Commissioners Present: Jonathan Cunningham, Vivian Phillips, Quinton Morris, Steve Galatro, Jescelle Major, S. Surface, Cassie Chinn, Priya Frank, Ayako Shapiro, Juan Alonso-Rodriguez, Sarah Wilke

Guests: MC Jace ECAj and Felicia Loud of Black Stax

ARTS Staff: Randy Engstrom, Amber Rose Jimenez, and Calandra Childers

Call to Order

Priya Frank called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m., with an acknowledgement that we are meeting on Indigenous land, that of the Coastal Salish people.

Approval of the December and January Minutes

Vivian Phillips motioned to approve the December 2017 and January 2018 Seattle Arts Commission meeting minutes. Jonathan Cunningham seconded the motion. All present approved.

Artist Presentation: Black Stax

Inspiring, relevant and controversial. Black Stax honors the legacy of Black Arts & Culture by 'stacking' all forms of Black music and art. MC, Jace ECAj and vocalist/actress Felicia Loud each bring over 25 Years of professional experience and numerous musical releases and stage appearances, including appearances at Floetry Reunion Tour, Upstream Music Festival and Divinity Roxx. A cornerstone of the Northwest community, Black Stax works with community and cultural organizations focused on youth and showcase art, social justice and activism, including CD Forum, Technology Access Foundation, Hip Hop Artist Residency, Langston Hughes and One Vibe Africa (Kenya). This commitment recently earned them a Community 4Culture grant to advance their work. Black Stax latest projects include Fiyastorm single and video and the one woman play, Say it Loud: Simply Me.

Black Stax is inspired by the youth, who are poised to elevate and evolve upon art and culture, and the power of young people and hip hop. They voiced the need for Seattle to support a music industry, so that the community can recognize their power in service of other dynamics, and the need to cultivate a pride of local artistry; they noted the Arts Commission has an opportunity to take on young people to show them how it works, saying, "not everyone will be on stage, but everyone can be creative."

Black Stax will host a record release event at the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute on March 30, 2018.



Leave of Absence Policy

Priya Frank introduced a Leave of Absence Policy amendment proposal for the Seattle Arts Commission Bylaws, drafted for review by Terri Hiroshima:

“Subject to majority vote by the Commission, a commissioner may take a leave of absence for personal or professional reasons and temporarily be removed from the Commission service for up to 12 months, relinquishing voting privileges and committee chair or co-chair positions; and resume their Commission position in full for the same amount of time as leave taken or until the end of that calendar year. An interim, At-Large commissioner may be appointed by the Commission for the duration of the leave or until the end of that calendar year.”

Discussion Considerations

- Develop a clear Conflicts of Interest policy; consult with City Ethics to ensure compliance
- Develop concise language within Art Commission onboarding materials that distinguishes a prohibition on applying for funding or a public art commission from the Office of Arts & Culture, and require Arts Commissioners to seek Leave of Absence prior to applying for any such awards
- Clarify that the At-Large, temporary appointment term would not preclude appointment to serve a permanent term of service

Motion: S. Surface motioned to approve the Leave of Absence policy proposal, with an amendment that the interim at large member is not precluded from serving a full term on the SAC if appointed to service. Dr. Quinton Morris seconded the motion. All approved.

New Commissioners

Commissioners discussed actions to fill the Mayoral Arts Commission vacancy and the At-Large, temporary vacancy, and considered candidates with prior experience with the work of the SAC and the Office of Arts & Culture to add value and context to the work immediately: Chieko Phillips, Ashraf Hassam, and Leilani Lewis. Additional candidates raised for consideration included Louie Gong and Adria Garcia. Overall considerations include:

- Build connections across the civic and cross-sector community ecosystem
- How can the SAC support the development, growth and cultivation of Get Engaged positions?
- Historically reflected a variety of age, gender, discipline, race, etc. and now have an opportunity to our relationship to Indigenous communities and replacing that voice within the temporary appointment

Mayor’s Arts Awards (MAA) Proposal

Calandra Childers provided an overview of the Mayor’s Arts Awards 2018 Recommendations prepared by ARTS staff and reviewed by Community Development and Outreach (CDO) Committee members; recommendations incorporate discussions held during SAC, CDO and MAA visioning sessions. Highlights from the proposal include retaining the name Mayor’s Arts Awards; requesting a Mayoral



representative to serve on a decision panel; standardizing categories; and exploring partnerships and methods of sharing notifications with nominees.

Members discussed the potential impacts of “People’s Choice” becoming a popularity contest, and the need for people to be present to vote during the Awards Ceremony; Racial Equity was raised as another consideration, and the category of “Youth Focus” expanding to feature an award for a young person within the arts & cultural sector, rather than just an arts organization that serves young people. A “Youth Arts Award” would, “allow us to formally recognize one of many brilliant young people that deserve to be recognized in the Seattle arts community.”

Staff will share the SAC feedback with CDO to further refine categories and finalize next steps.

Youth & Communities Update

Commissioners serving on the Youth & Communities Committee and ARTS Staff decided to pause the committee partnership with the Seattle Music Commission, as the Seattle Arts Commission strategizes how to evolve the advisory capacity needed to serve the Arts & Culture community around three emergent areas: youth programs, cultural partnerships funding, and racial equity.

Randy Engstrom will continue to serve as a liaison between the Arts Commission and the Youth & Communities Committee, attending the monthly meetings and reporting back to the SAC.

Director’s Report

Randy Engstrom provided an overview of ARTS updates for SAC:

- Cultural Partnership Manager, Kathy Hsieh, and her team, will present a session at an upcoming Seattle Arts Commission meeting to address the long-term vision for racial equity within the ARTS funding program; the conversation will address ways that the SAC may convene a task force or an ad hoc committee around this topic.
- Current areas of opportunity for increased Commissioner advisory support are around Youth, Racial Equity and Funding. Racial Equity planning is underway between staff and Commissioners, and staff are leveraging and tracking our commitment to racial equity in part by relaunching a Change Team; though, emergent opportunities exist to align staff and Commission racial equity efforts. SAC will discuss committee structure during the next monthly meeting

Meeting adjourned at 5:30